

# ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

## DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES



### NEWS RELEASE

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### **Prince William Sound Salmon Fishery News Release #58**

**SEINE FISHERIES:** Eggtakes are underway at SGH, with approximately 81% of the final goal completed through August 18. A pink salmon cleanup fishery near SGH is anticipated upon completion of VFDA's eggtake operations. A Thursday cleanup fishery is likely, with time and area to be announced at 2 pm on Wednesday, August 21. VFDA reports a surplus of 50,000 to 60,000 fish in the vicinity of SGH.

PWSAC completed its pink salmon cost recovery program on July 31, and reports a hatchery escapement estimate of 918,000 pink salmon at AFK, CCH, and WNH. PWSAC's final broodstock needs include a cumulative hatchery escapement of 949,000 pink salmon at these facilities. PWSAC expects to begin its eggtake operations this week. With wild and hatchery escapement goals having been met throughout Prince William Sound, a regular schedule of two fishing periods per week will begin on Thursday, August 22.

ADF&G sampling of CPF harvest from the Northern and Southwestern districts on August 17 resulted in estimated sex ratios of 62% and 63% female, respectively. Final harvest numbers for the August 18 fishery in Prince William Sound are unavailable at the time of this announcement; however, it is estimated that at least 6.24 million pink salmon were harvested from August 16 through August 18 using an average weight of 2.8 pounds per fish. Cumulative pink salmon harvest totals for Prince William Sound through August 18 include approximately 1.8 million VFDA cost recovery fish, 1.7 million PWSAC cost recovery fish, and an estimated 80.9 million CPF fish.

**EASTERN DISTRICT:** Waters of the Eastern District, south of a line from Entrance Point to Potato Point, will open to commercial purse seine fishing for a 36-hour fishing period beginning at 8:00 am on Tuesday, August 20, and ending at 8:00 pm on Wednesday, August 21. This fishing period will be followed by an 84-hour fishing period beginning at 8:00 am on Thursday, August 22, with area to be announced on Wednesday.

**The following regulatory closed waters in the Eastern District as defined in 5 AAC 24.350(3) are being suspended until further notice:**

1. Sheep Bay: north of a line from 60° 41.99' N. lat., 145° 56.11' W. long. to 60° 41.17' N. lat., 145° 55.87' W. long.;
2. Olsen Bay: north of 60° 44.06' N. lat.;
3. Beartrap Bay: east of a line from 60° 44.86' N. lat., 145° 59.64' W. long. to 60° 44.55' N. lat., 145° 59.62' W. long.;

Anadromous stream closures as defined in 5 AAC 39.290 remain in effect until further notice. Pink salmon harvest estimates for recent Eastern District CPFs include 137,000 on August 16, with 9 deliveries reported. Harvest estimates for the August 15 and August 17 Eastern District CPFs are confidential. Cumulative Eastern District harvest through August 17 was 231 Chinook, 12,600 sockeye, 9,280 coho, 25.6 million pink, and 78,100 chum salmon.

**NORTHERN DISTRICT:** Waters of the Northern District, **excluding the CCH SHA, CCH THA, and excluding all waters of the Cannery Creek Subdistrict north and east of a line with a northwest terminus of 61° 00.97' N. lat., 147° 35.50' W. long., and a southeast terminus of 60° 59.12' N. lat., 147° 32.35' W. long.,** will open to commercial purse seine fishing for a 36-hour fishing period beginning at 8:00 am on Tuesday, August 20, and ending at 8:00 pm on Wednesday, August 21. This fishing period will be followed by an 84-hour fishing period beginning at 8:00 am on Thursday, August 22, with area to be announced on Wednesday. Pink salmon harvest estimates for recent Northern District CPFs include 483,000 on August 15, with 44 deliveries; 435,000 on August 16, with 51 deliveries; 425,000 on August 17, with 43 deliveries. Cumulative Northern District harvest through August 17 was 24 Chinook, 3,010 sockeye, 2,090 coho, 15 million pink, and 5,150 chum salmon.

**COGHILL DISTRICT:** Waters of the Coghill District, **excluding waters of the WNH HEEZ**, will open to commercial DRIFT GILLNET and PURSE SEINE fishing for a 36-hour fishing period beginning at 8:00 am on Tuesday, August 20, and ending at 8:00 pm on Wednesday, August 21. This fishing period will be followed by an 84-hour fishing period beginning at 8:00 am on Thursday, August 22, with area to be announced on Wednesday. The WNH HEEZ consists of the waters of the WNH SHA north of a latitude line at 60° 47.78' N. Pink salmon harvest estimates for recent Coghill District CPFs include 178,000 on August 15; 101,000 on August 16; 52,600 on August 17. There were 24 purse seine and 340 gillnet deliveries reported for these periods. Cumulative Coghill District purse seine harvest through August 17 was 57 Chinook, 4,890 sockeye, 2,010 coho, 7.26 million pink, and 5,590 chum salmon.

**NORTHWESTERN DISTRICT:** Waters of the Northwestern District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for a 36-hour fishing period beginning at 8:00 am on Tuesday, August 20, and ending at 8:00 pm on Wednesday, August 21. This fishing period will be followed by an 84-hour fishing period beginning at 8:00 am on Thursday, August 22, with area to be announced on Wednesday. There was no harvest reported for the August 15 through August 17 Northwestern District CPFs. Cumulative Northwestern District harvest through August 17 was 485 sockeye, 85 coho, 137,000 pink, and 167 chum salmon.

**SOUTHWESTERN DISTRICT:** Waters of the Southwestern District, **excluding waters of the AFK Outer HEEZ**, will open to commercial purse seine fishing for a 36-hour fishing period beginning at 8:00 am on Tuesday, August 20, and ending at 8:00 pm on Wednesday, August 21. This fishing period will be followed by an 84-hour fishing period beginning at 8:00 am on Thursday, August 22, with area to be announced on Wednesday. The AFK Outer HEEZ consists of the waters of the AFK SHA west and south of a line from 60° 03.398' N. lat., 148° 03.326' W. long. to 60° 03.017' N. lat., 148° 02.547' W. long. Pink salmon harvest estimates for recent Southwestern District CPFs include 1.41 million on August 15, with 135 deliveries; 1.63 million on August 16, with 165 deliveries; 1.27 million on August 17, with 135 deliveries. Cumulative Southwestern District harvest through August 17 was 200 Chinook, 36,700 sockeye, 33,700 coho, 28.6 million pink, and 227,000 chum salmon.

**MONTAGUE DISTRICT:** Waters of the Montague District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for a 36-hour fishing period beginning at 8:00 am on Tuesday, August 20, and ending at 8:00 pm on Wednesday, August 21. This fishing period will be followed by an 84-hour fishing period beginning at 8:00 am on Thursday, August 22, with area to be announced on Wednesday. Harvest estimates for the August 15 through August 17 Montague District CPFs are confidential. Cumulative Montague District harvest through August 17 was 1 sockeye, 183 coho, 259,000 pink, and 37 chum salmon.

**SOUTHEASTERN DISTRICT:** Waters of the Southeastern District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for a 36-hour fishing period beginning at 8:00 am on Tuesday, August 20, and ending at 8:00 pm on Wednesday, August 21. This fishing period will be followed by an 84-hour fishing period beginning at 8:00 am on Thursday, August 22, with area to be announced on Wednesday.

**The following regulatory closed waters in the Southeastern District as defined in 5 AAC 24.350(11) are being suspended until further notice:**

1. Port Etches: east of a line from 60° 21.09' N. lat., 146° 33.94' W. long. to 60° 20.06' N. lat., 146° 32.72' W. long., and south of a line from 60° 19.71' N. lat., 146° 34.11' W. long. to 60° 19.01' N. lat., 146° 35.62' W. long.;

Anadromous stream closures as defined in 5 AAC 39.290 remain in effect until further notice. There was no harvest reported for the August 15 through August 17 Southeastern District CPFs. Cumulative Southeastern District harvest through August 17 was 263 Chinook, 8,770 sockeye, 1,390 coho, 2.66 million pink, and 41,000 chum salmon.

**The next scheduled salmon fisheries announcement is anticipated to occur by 2:00 pm Wednesday, August 21.**

Permit holders are advised that unscheduled announcements based on current escapement data may occur at any time inseason either establishing an additional period or extending an open period.

Announcement recordings are available for **gillnet fisheries at 907-424-7535 and seine fisheries at 907-424-7345. In addition, announcement recordings are available in Anchorage at 267-2843.**

Additionally, announcements, inseason harvest data, and escapement data are available at the following web addresses:  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.main> (Copper River homepage) or  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareapws.main> (Prince William Sound homepage).

Unless otherwise specified, all openings are clock openings based on Alaska Daylight Time, which is based on Coordinated Universal Time and may be obtained by calling 303-499-7111.

The department encourages commercial permit holders to renew their licenses early and to check their CFEC vessel registration stickers to make sure that they are current.

The department also encourages permit holders to report observed violations to Wildlife Safeguard at 800-478-3377. Reports are anonymous and cash rewards may be paid for successful prosecution of violations.

PWS commercial fishers are reminded that area fisheries often necessitate fishing in close proximity to marine mammals. Under the Marine Mammals Protection Act (MMPA), the PWS drift gillnet fishery is classified as a Category II fishery. Participants in Category I and II fisheries must be registered in the Marine Mammal Avoidance Program (MMAP) to be authorized for lawful incidental, but not intentional, marine mammal takes during fishing. However, this authorization explicitly does **not** exempt holders of commercial fishing permits from the MMPA prohibition on takes of marine mammals listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act. As a participant in the PWS drift gillnet fishery you are automatically registered in the Marine Mammal Authorization Program (MMAP) by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). As a participant in a Category II fishery, you must:

- Maintain an MMAP Authorization Certificate, or a photocopy, on board the vessel while engaging in any of the fisheries identified on the reverse side of the certificate. For non-vessel or set net fisheries, the enclosed Certificate, or a photocopy, must be in the possession of the permit holder during fishing operations. This Certificate, in combination with a current, valid state or Federal fishing permit, will serve as your authorization to incidentally take non-endangered or non-threatened marine mammals in the course of commercial fishing operations.
- Report all injuries and mortalities of marine mammals within 48 hours of returning from the trip during which these takes occurred using the MMAP Mortality/Injury Reporting Form (visit [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/interactions/mmap\\_reporting\\_form.pdf](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/interactions/mmap_reporting_form.pdf) for a copy).
- If so requested, take an observer aboard your vessel.

Purse seine and set gillnet gear are classified as a category III fisheries under the MMPA. Category III fishery participants are automatically exempted from the incidental take prohibition in the MMPA. Therefore, you do not need to maintain the MMAP certificate aboard your vessel, but must report any incidental takes of marine mammals within 48 hours of the incident or your return to port. Such reports must be made on the Marine Mammals Authorization Program Mortality/Injury Reporting Form.

Because some marine mammals are also listed under the Endangered Species Act, incidental takes are also regulated under that act and are not authorized. **All** MMPA category fisheries are liable for incidentally taking ESA listed species.

Please reference [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/esa\\_factsheet.pdf](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/esa_factsheet.pdf) for a list of marine mammals currently listed under the ESA (you should periodically check with the National Marine Fisheries Service for any changes in listed species). Under the ESA, take means to "harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct." 16U.S.C. 1532(19); and harass means an "intentional or negligent act or omission which creates the likelihood of injury to the wildlife by annoying it to such an extent as to significantly disrupt normal behavioral patterns which include, but are not limited to, breeding, feeding, or sheltering." (50 C.F.R. 17.3).

To reduce the possibility of incidentally taking an ESA listed species and its associated liability ADF&G recommends that:

- Fishermen participating in area fisheries remain vigilant in monitoring gear when marine mammals may be present.
- Fishermen use avoidance measures (e.g., not fishing or relocating fishing activities when marine mammals are present or likely to be present) to minimize interactions with marine mammals.
- Avoid fishing in areas where marine mammals are likely to be present at night or when visibility or weather conditions make it difficult to spot marine mammals.

For further questions concerning marine mammal regulations call NMFS at 907-271-5006.